

# Broken-hearted Find God's Peace, Joy Through the "CBS Experience"



Lorena with her children

**"My life had a total upheaval that I never could have thought I would live through.** One week before celebrating our 19th wedding anniversary, my husband — a pastor at that time — told me he was leaving me, and our three young children. His only explanation was that he no longer loved me. From one day to the next, my life took a 180-degree turn."

It is with understandable grief that Lorena, a seven-year member of a CBSI class in Santiago, Chile, shares this tragic and painful story. She continues,

"My husband not only forsook his family, but renounced the pastorate, left his other work, abandoned his friends (many that we had in common) — everything. I sought

out the help of a psychologist and a psychiatrist, but nothing helped. It was at this point when God took my life and started to mold it according to His will. That is when I understood that God only wanted for me to have a relationship with Him, as my healing would only occur in and by His hand. **That is also when CBS began to take a primary role in my life.**

"So many times I have heard of God's sovereignty ... that God's plans are perfect ... that God has everything under control, and so on. I was clinging onto these words when I arrived at my first CBS study.

"Even though a friend, Claudia, had been inviting me to participate for several years, for various reasons, I simply could not accept her invitation. However, in the summer of 2012, Claudia once more extended the same invitation. But this time, God put it in my heart to accept. And it was during my participation in 2013 that all those phrases I mentioned above began to become a reality in my life.

"The dear friends I made at my CBS study were witnesses to my pain, my crying, my discouragement—all that I struggled through. But they have also been my pillars, my shoulders to cry on, my accompaniment, my strength, my comfort, and so much more. **Most importantly, they have been witnesses to my change and transformation.**

"Today I understand fully that CBS arrived only because God willed it so—because times of great difficulty and pain were coming—but still I needed to go forward. In CBSI I have learned to know God in a very personal way: learning from each testimony and the "day by day" that each one shares; learning to live fully knowing that God is present in each moment of our lives; learning to leave everything in His hands while resting in



Nicaragua Conference

Ten CBSI leaders from Nicaragua planned to attend the first Regional Conference for the Americas last October, but Mexico only granted visas for four of them.

The fortunate four came back from the conference highly motivated—they encouraged the rest of the team to organize their own first National Conference for all CBSI teachers in Nicaragua. The event would be costly, but the CBSI leaders immediately began to raise funds by selling food, holding garage sales, etc.

After months of prayer, fasting and hard work, the great day arrived! Thirty teachers from across Nicaragua gathered to praise God and learn together. It was a fresh encounter with the Spirit of God, resulting in spiritual strengthening and a renewed passion to lead caring, in-depth Bible studies in their communities.

His care for me and my children. I can also share that my husband continues to be in my prayers daily, because I know that God is the One who has my husband's transformation under His governance and in His perfect timing.

"Unfortunately, it is inevitable that there will be more women with cases like mine. **But fortunately, there will also be invitations to participate in and live the CBSI experience:** a place of encountering God, as well as a place to encounter friends and prayer warriors; a place of love without prejudice and questioning; a place of peace, tranquility and happiness; a moment of new breath for the week as well as continued strength for the path that God has traced for our lives. **A place to be grateful for each moment that God gives as gifts to us live.**

"God mended my heart with the support of my CBS friends while studying His Word in community. As a result, these prophetic words from Habakkuk 3:17-19) have become my reality:

Though the fig tree should not blossom, nor fruit be on the vines, the produce of the olive fail and the fields yield no food, the flock be cut off from the fold and there be no herd in the stalls, yet I will rejoice in the Lord; I will take joy in the God of my salvation. God, the Lord, is my strength; he makes my feet like the deer's; he makes me tread on my high places."

Stories of transformation like those of Lorena's are what keep CBS servant-leaders, like Americas Regional Director, Shirley Adams, running hard.

**Will you please run with Shirley in the ways that you are able?** Shirley and her team need prayer. They would appreciate notes of encouragement from you and your class. Obviously, they also need financial resources. Could I simply ask and encourage you to go before the Lord in their behalf to ask Him how He would like you to run?

Grateful for you!



Keith Spartzak, International Director

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## Share Good News!



From Blanca, 20 years old, El Salvador:

"I started a CBS study—the first Bible study at our church. Unfortunately, at the beginning



not many people were interested. Neither was I. Eventually, the Bible study caught my attention as well as many people of the church. It started to grow as people began to understand God's Word.

"I was asked to take part of a training that took place in my church for all the new leaders who would start classes. I did not know what God was doing in my life or what He was preparing me for. I started to be a facilitator of a Children & Youth group. It caused me to grow up spiritually, emotionally, and physically. The plan of God is always perfect!

"After a couple of months, I started to be a volunteer with Kenia Orellana in a women's prison. At the beginning I was freaked because I had no idea how people would see and receive me inside of the prison. I was only 19! I can say, it has been the best experience, because God has called me to share the good news of salvation to all who have no hope.

"We grew to two groups of 50 women. It was so amazing the way God started to work in their lives through CBSI: some of the were healed spiritually and physically, and now have good relationships with God.

"When I saw what God was doing in those women, I too felt encouraged to study the Bible more deeply. I do not have enough words to describe how my life has changed, and the way that God speaks to me through His word. I am so thankful for CBSI because through the Word of God my life has been transformed."